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SIPDIS
FOR IO/HR (PATEL) AND NEA/ELA

E.O. 12958: DECL: 2035/02/25
TAGS: [PREL](#) [PHUM](#) [UN](#) [EG](#)
SUBJECT: DEMARCHE DELIVERED: MARCH UN HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL SESSION
PRIORITIES

REF: 10 STATE 16236; 10 TEL AVIV 432

CLASSIFIED BY: Stephen O'Dowd, Counselor, State, ECPO; REASON:
1.4(B), (D)

¶1. (C) On February 23, we delivered ref A demarche to MFA Deputy Director for Human Rights Omar Shalaby. On defamation of religions, Shalaby said Egypt would support the OIC position. He believed there is currently no broad backing for a binding treaty. On Guinea, Shalaby said Nigeria would take the lead, and committed to discussing the issue with the Nigerian government. On the Democratic Republic of the Congo, he told us Egypt favors a thematic mandate. According to Shalaby, Egypt believes that the previous special procedures mandate was not effective, and the Africa Group would continue to maintain this position. On Iran, Shalaby said Egypt would not support a resolution, consistent with its policy of opposing country specific resolutions. He noted that the GOE would accept discussion of the situation in Iran at the March session. On DPRK and Burma, Shalaby told us Egypt would support the positions of the two states concerned. He said Egypt would back special rapporteurs if the DPRK and Burma agreed.

¶2. (C) On the Goldstone Report, Shalaby said the GOE is considering how to pursue the issue. He noted GOE concern that the Israeli Government's February 21 announcement of a plan to preserve and rehabilitate "national heritage sites" included the Tomb of the Patriarchs in Hebron and Rachel's Tomb in Bethlehem (ref B). Shalaby thought the GOE might seek action on this issue at the March session. (Note: On February 22, the MFA issued a statement "strongly condemning...the Israeli government's decision to enlist the Ibrahimi mosque and Belal Mosque on the Israeli national heritage list." The statement "described this decision as illegal since Israel is an occupation force in the West Bank." End note.)

¶3. (C) Shalaby said Egypt would focus on Israeli-Palestinian issues, African issues, defamation of religions, and racism at the March session. He noted that the GOE has not planned any specific initiatives.
SCOBAY